

## Post-9/11 GI Bill: Transferability

### What is transferability?

The Post-9/11 GI Bill allows uniformed service members (officer or enlisted, active duty or Selected Reserve), on or after August 1, 2009, to transfer unused education benefits to immediate family members (spouse and children). The service member must have at least six years of service, and commit to an additional four years of service in order to transfer benefits to a spouse or child. Because of the potential impact of this benefit on recruiting and retention, transferability policy is determined by the Department of Defense (DoD) and the military services.

For information on policy and rules for transferability of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, visit the DoD GI Bill website at [http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/2009/0409\\_gibill/](http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/2009/0409_gibill/).

While the Post-9/11 GI Bill offers a very generous post-service education benefit, a special provision of the program allows career service members the opportunity to share their education benefits with immediate family members.

### Eligible Service Members

Any member of the Uniformed Services (active duty or Selected Reserve, officer or enlisted, Public Health or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) on or after August 1, 2009, who is eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, **and**

- Has at least 6 years of service on the date of election and agrees to serve 4 additional years in the Armed Forces from the date of election.
- Has at least 10 years of service on the date of election, is precluded by either standard policy (service or DoD) or statute from committing to 4 additional years, and agrees to serve for the maximum amount of time allowed by such policy or statute, **or**

Is (or becomes) retirement eligible during the period from August 1, 2009, through August 1, 2013. A service member is considered to be retirement eligible if he or she has completed 20 years of active duty or 20 qualifying years of reserve service.

### Eligible Family Members

An individual approved to transfer entitlement to educational assistance under this section may transfer the entitlement to his or her spouse and/or children.

- A family member must be enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS) at the time of transfer to receive transferred educational benefits.
- A child's subsequent marriage will not affect his or her eligibility to receive the educational benefit; however, after a transferor has designated a child as a transferee under this section, the transferor retains the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.
- A subsequent divorce will not affect the transferee's eligibility to receive educational benefits; however, after a transferor has designated a spouse as a transferee under this section, the eligible transferor retains the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.

## **Conditions of Transfer**

An eligible Service member may transfer up to the total months of unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, or the entire 36 months if the member has used none.

Family member use of transferred educational benefits is subject to the following:

Spouse:

- May start to use the benefit immediately.
- May use the benefit while the member remains in the Armed Forces or after separation from active duty.
- Is not eligible for the monthly housing stipend while the member is serving on active duty.
- Can use the benefit for up to 15 years after the service member's last separation from active duty.

Child:

- May start to use the benefit only after the individual making the transfer has completed at least 10 years of service in the Uniformed Services.
- May use the benefit while the eligible individual remains in the Uniformed Services or after separation from active duty.
- May not use the benefit until he/she has attained a secondary school diploma (or equivalency certificate), or reached 18 years of age.
- Is entitled to the monthly stipend and books and supplies stipend even if the eligible transferor is on active duty.
- Is not subject to the 15-year delimiting date, but may not use the benefit after reaching 26 years of age.

**For more information on the Post-9/11 GI Bill, call toll-free 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551), or visit the VA GI Bill Website at <http://www.gibill.va.gov>.**